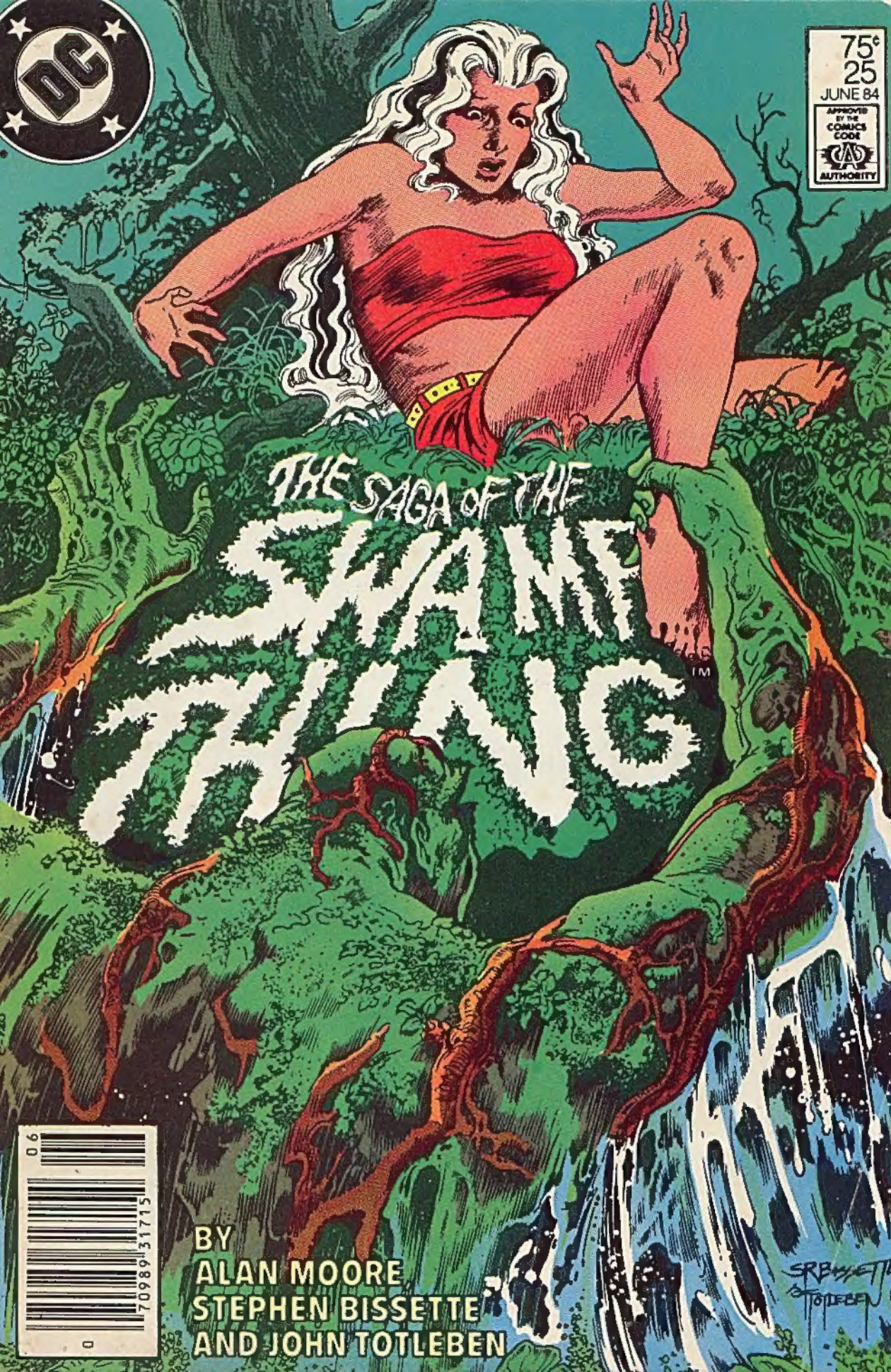
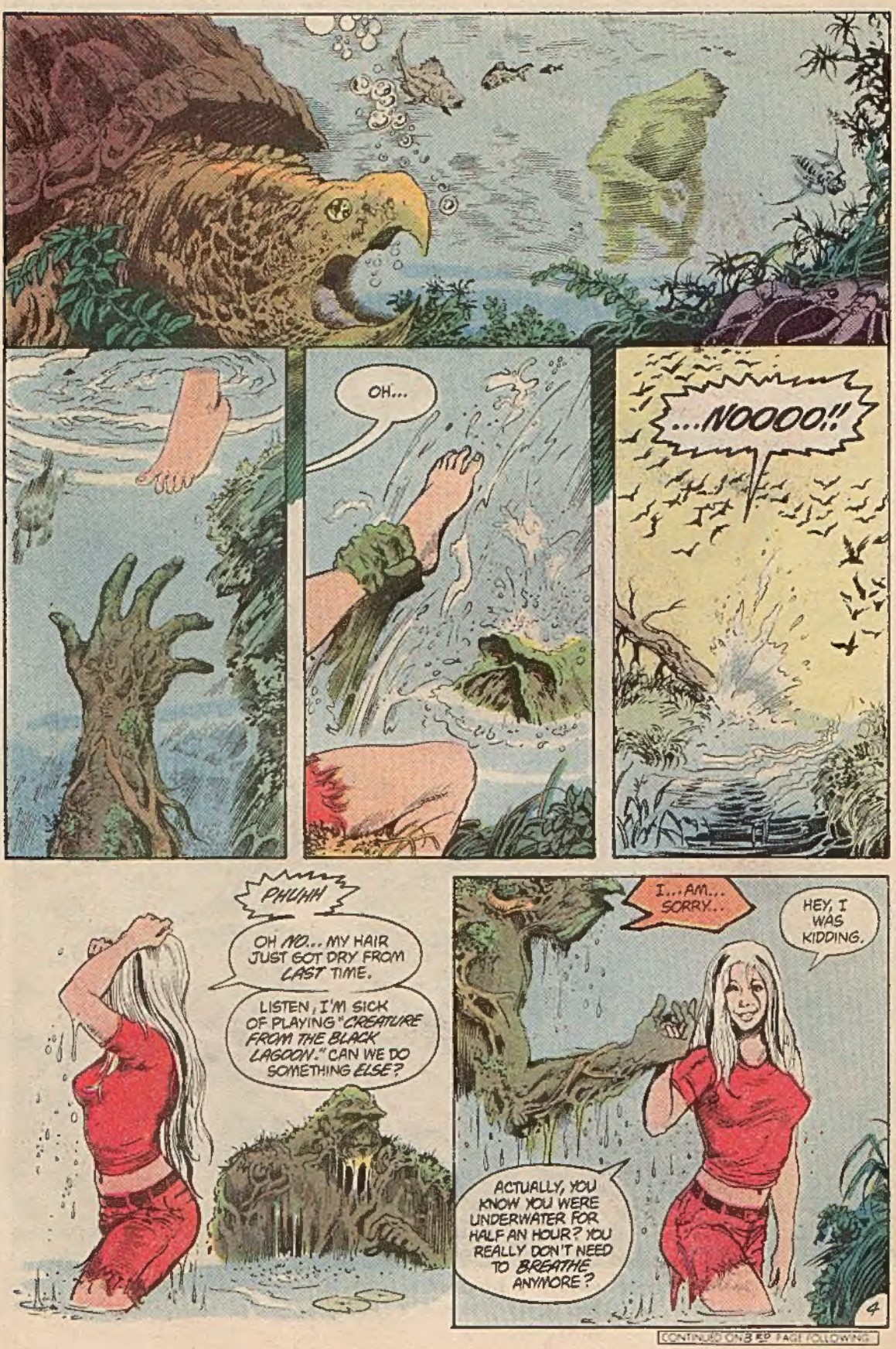

DC
75¢
25
JUNE 84
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE SAGA OF THE
SWAMP THING
BY
ALAN MOORE,
STEPHEN BISSETTE
AND JOHN TOTLEBEN

HE ARRIVED AT THE BATON ROUGE BUS DEPOT AT A LITTLE AFTER ELEVEN ON MONDAY MORNING...
GATE 13
BATON ROUGE
...SO ANYWAY, MISTER, IT'S BEEN A GREAT PLEASURE TALKIN' TO YA!
I KNOW.
I KNOW THAT TWELVE YEARS AGO YOU CRASHED YOUR CAR WHILE DRUNK. YOU WALKED AWAY UNHURT. YOUR WIFE'S BEEN CONFINED TO A WHEELCHAIR EVER SINCE.
CURRENTLY, YOU HAVE FIVE DIFFERENT "GIRL-FRIENDS." YOU DO NOT BOTHER TO CONCEAL THEM FROM YOUR WIFE, ALTHOUGH YOU KNOW HOW MUCH PAIN THIS CAUSES HER...
HEY! WAIT, I NEVER TOLD YOU ANY...
AN' LISSEN, IF YOU EVER NEED ANY LOFT INSULATION, HARRY PRICE IS MY NAME, THIS IS MY CARD...
HA.
I'M SORRY, MR. PRICE, THIS CARD WON'T BE ANY USE TO ME.
HEY, NOW LOOK, YOU NEVER KNOW...
HARRY PRICE INC.
LOFT INSULATION
...AND AT 5:32 THIS EVENING YOU WILL BE IMPALED BY A SWORDFISH.
THERE IS NOTHING TO BE DONE. IT IS WRITTEN. SELENA HAS ALREADY DECIDED NOT TO BUY THE LAWN FURNITURE.
SO YOU SEE...
...YOUR CARD WON'T BE ANY USE TO ME AT ALL.
GOOD DAY.

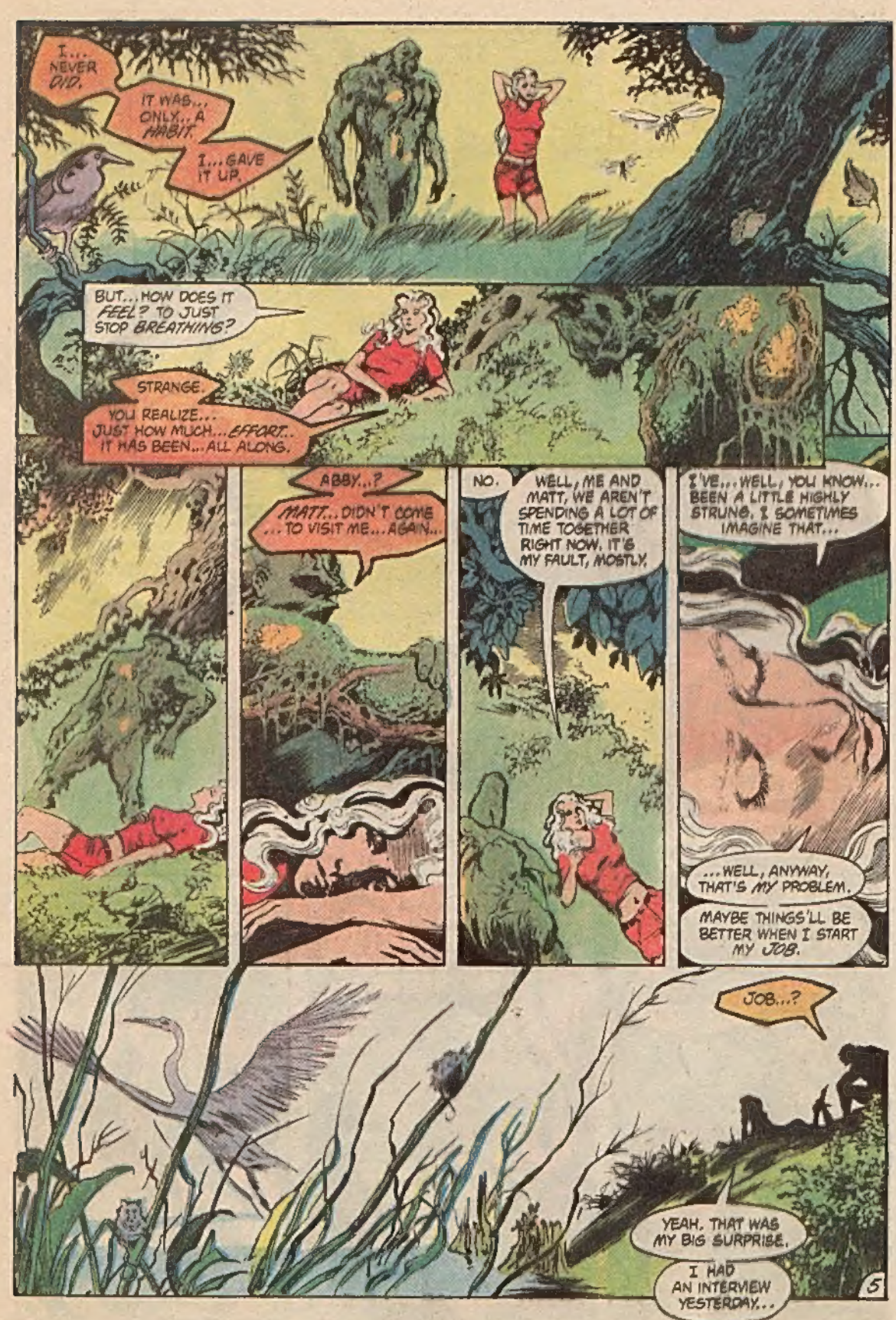
THE SAGA OF SWAMP THING 25 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., PO Box 1306-F, Fort Lee, NJ 07024. Annual subscription rate $9.00. Outside USA $10.00. Copyright © 1984 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. Printed in USA. Advertising Representative: Sanford Schwarz & Co., 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400.
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company

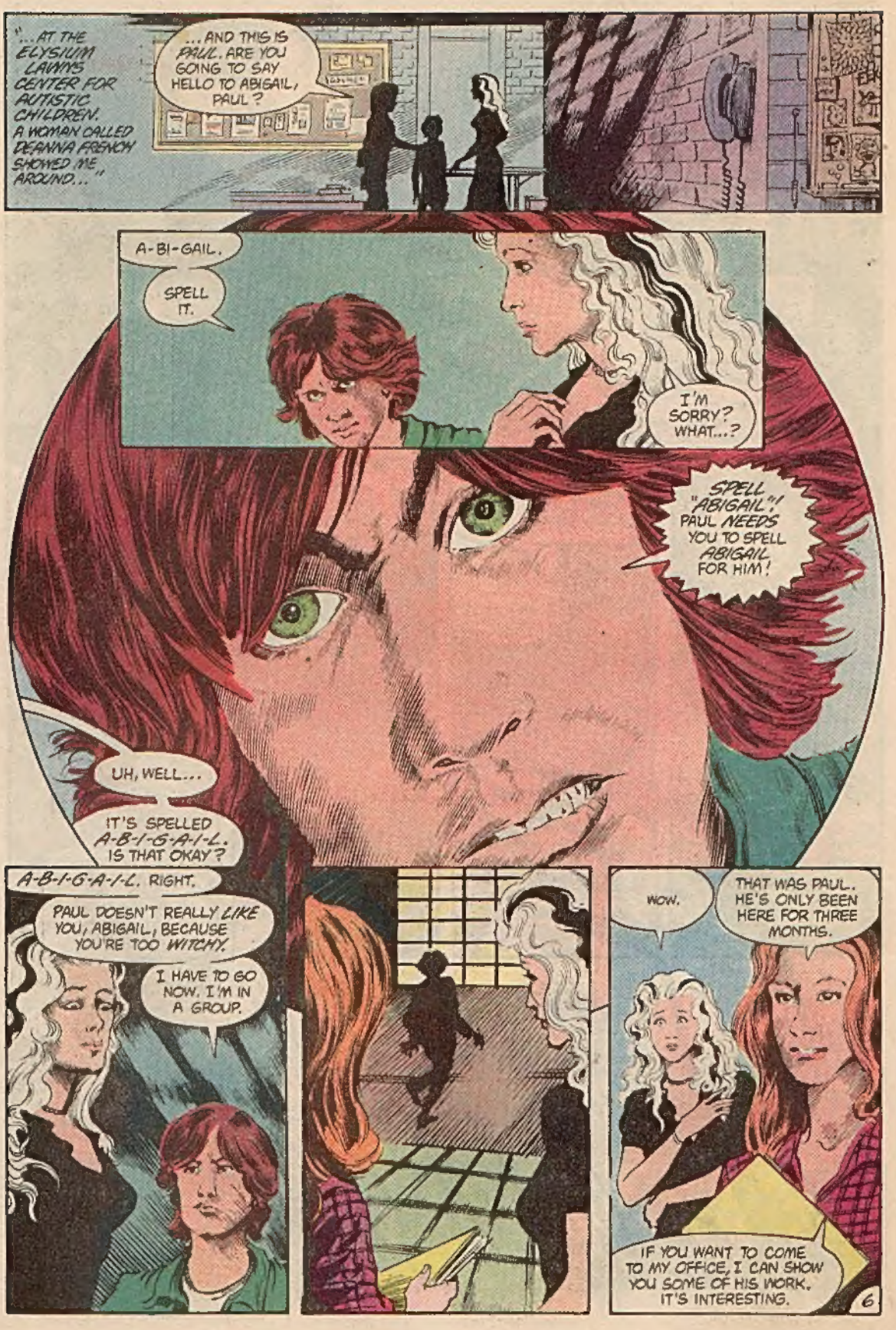
ON HIS WAY TO HIS HOTEL, HE CALLED AT "THIRD EYE BOOKS AND PARAPHERNALIA" AND PURCHASED SOME AMBER INCENSE.
EXCUSE ME...
YHUH?
BUY BONGS CHEAP!
COMIX
SALE OF TAROT PACKS
BEANO
DO YOU SELL MANY OF THESE?
NAH, AT THE MOMENT, I'M DOING A LOT OF AURA GOGGLES AN' STUFF LIKE THAT, BUT OUIJA BOARDS...
I THINK I SOLD ONE SIX MONTHS AGO, YOU WANT ONE?
POSTER 660
POSTER 334
DRUNK
TREEFA BEER
NIKE OAN FOR SOMETHIN'
ES
NO
CDEFGHIJKLM.
PQRSTUVWXYZ
NO...NO, I DON'T THINK SO.
AHH, BUT THIS... THIS IS GOYA, ISN'T IT?
UH, IS THAT L-402? GOYA. YEAH, I THINK SO. "THE SLEEP OF REASON..."
POSTER 334
"...BRINGS FOR MONSTERS." YES. HE SHOWED ME THE ORIGINAL SKETCHES, BUT I LOST TOUCH WITH HIM AND SOMEHOW NEVER GOT TO SEE THE FINISHED WORK.
A MOST APPROPRIATE PIECE, I'LL TAKE IT.
UH, RIGHT...
AT ELEVEN THIRTY-EIGHT HE GAVE THIRTEEN DOLLARS TO A PRIEST COLLECTING FOR THE MISSION FUND, AND THEN LAUGHED FOR A FULL MINUTE.
THE HOTEL WAS NOT THE BEST, BUT IT WAS THE MOST ATMOSPHERIC.
THE DEVIL CHECKED IN AT NOON.
2

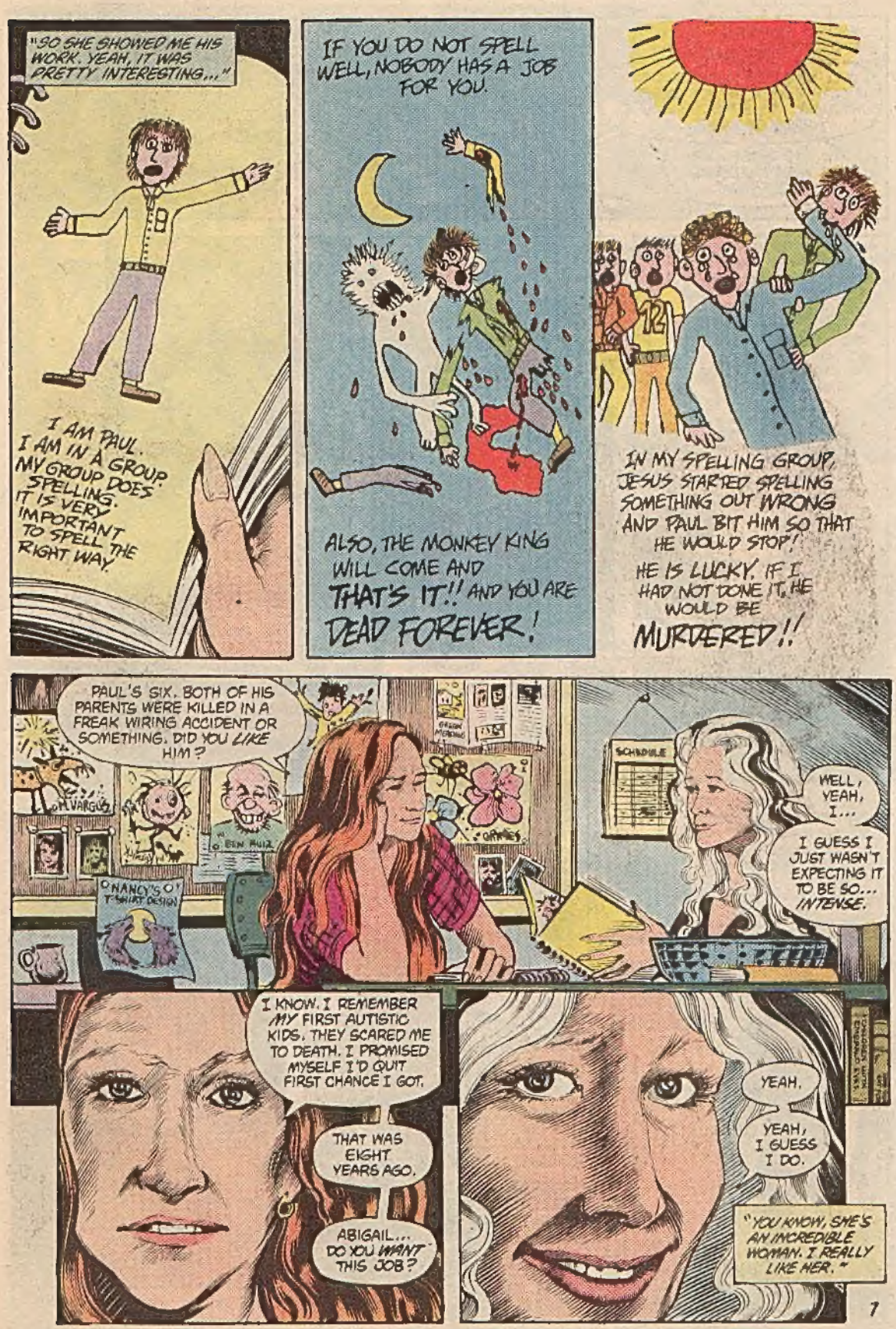
an alan moore : writer * stephen bissette & john totleben : artists
karen berger : editor * tatjana wood : colorist * john costanza : letterer presentation


OH...
...NOOOO!!
PHUHH
OH NO... MY HAIR JUST GOT DRY FROM LAST TIME.
LISTEN, I'M SICK OF PLAYING "CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON." CAN WE DO SOMETHING ELSE?
I...AM... SORRY...
HEY, I WAS KIDDING.
ACTUALLY, YOU KNOW YOU WERE UNDERWATER FOR HALF AN HOUR? YOU REALLY DON'T NEED TO BREATHE ANYMORE?
4

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING


I... NEVER DID.
IT WAS... ONLY... A HABIT.
I... GAVE IT UP.
BUT... HOW DOES IT FEEL? TO JUST STOP BREATHING?
STRANGE.
YOU REALIZE... JUST HOW MUCH... EFFORT... IT HAS BEEN... ALL ALONG.
ABBY...?
MATT... DIDN'T COME ... TO VISIT ME... AGAIN...
NO.
WELL, ME AND MATT, WE AREN'T SPENDING A LOT OF TIME TOGETHER RIGHT NOW. IT'S MY FAULT, MOSTLY.
I'VE... WELL, YOU KNOW... BEEN A LITTLE HIGHLY STRUNG. I SOMETIMES IMAGINE THAT...
...WELL, ANYWAY, THAT'S MY PROBLEM.
MAYBE THINGS'LL BE BETTER WHEN I START MY JOB.
JOB...?
YEAH. THAT WAS MY BIG SURPRISE.
I HAD AN INTERVIEW YESTERDAY...
5

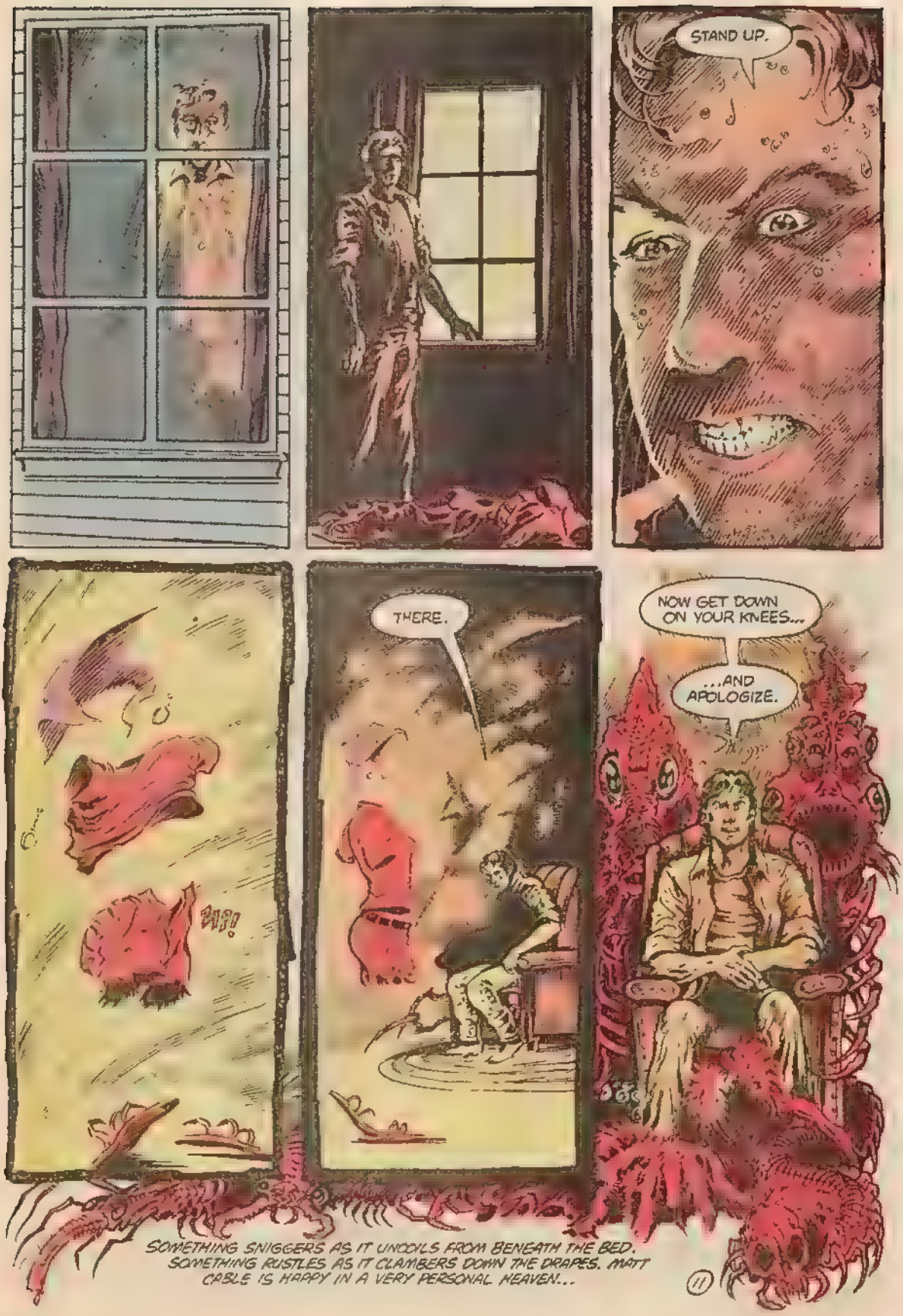

"...AT THE ELYSIUM LAWNS CENTER FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN. A WOMAN CALLED DEANNA FRENCH SHOWED ME AROUND..."
...AND THIS IS PAUL. ARE YOU GOING TO SAY HELLO TO ABIGAIL, PAUL?
A-BI-GAIL.
SPELL IT.
I'M SORRY? WHAT...?
SPELL "ABIGAIL"! PAUL NEEDS YOU TO SPELL ABIGAIL FOR HIM!
UH, WELL...
IT'S SPELLED A-B-I-G-A-I-L. IS THAT OKAY?
A-B-I-G-A-I-L. RIGHT.
PAUL DOESN'T REALLY LIKE YOU, ABIGAIL, BECAUSE YOU'RE TOO WITCHY.
I HAVE TO GO NOW. I'M IN A GROUP.
WOW.
THAT WAS PAUL. HE'S ONLY BEEN HERE FOR THREE MONTHS.
IF YOU WANT TO COME TO MY OFFICE, I CAN SHOW YOU SOME OF HIS WORK. IT'S INTERESTING.
6


"SO SHE SHOWED ME HIS WORK. YEAH, IT WAS PRETTY INTERESTING..."
I AM PAUL. I AM IN A GROUP. MY GROUP DOES SPELLING. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO SPELL THE RIGHT WAY.
IF YOU DO NOT SPELL WELL, NOBODY HAS A JOB FOR YOU.
ALSO, THE MONKEY KING WILL COME AND THAT'S IT!! AND YOU ARE DEAD FOREVER!
IN MY SPELLING GROUP, JESUS STARTED SPELLING SOMETHING OUT WRONG AND PAUL BIT HIM SO THAT HE WOULD STOP!
HE IS LUCKY. IF I HAD NOT DONE IT, HE WOULD BE MURDERED!!
PAUL'S SIX. BOTH OF HIS PARENTS WERE KILLED IN A FREAK WIRING ACCIDENT OR SOMETHING. DID YOU LIKE HIM?
H. VARGUS
BEN RUIZ
"NANCY'S O" T-SHIRT DESIGN
SCHEDULE
WELL, YEAH, I...
I GUESS I JUST WASN'T EXPECTING IT TO BE SO... INTENSE.
I KNOW. I REMEMBER MY FIRST AUTISTIC KIDS. THEY SCARED ME TO DEATH. I PROMISED MYSELF I'D QUIT FIRST CHANCE I GOT.
THAT WAS EIGHT YEARS AGO.
ABIGAIL... DO YOU WANT THIS JOB?
YEAH.
YEAH, I GUESS I DO.
"YOU KNOW, SHE'S AN INCREDIBLE WOMAN. I REALLY LIKE HER."

...AND SO ANYWAY, I START TOMORROW.
IT'LL GIVE US A LITTLE SECURITY, IT'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO GET INVOLVED WITH SOMEONE ELSE'S PROBLEMS, AND...
...AND THOSE KIDS. I WISH YOU COULD SEE THEM...
ANYWAY, LISTEN; I HAVE TO DRIVE DOWN TO BATON ROUGE TO BUY SOME STUFF THAT I NEED, AND I TOLD MATT I'D BE AROUND FOR LUNCH.
I'D BETTER GO. MY HAIR CAN DRY ON THE WAY...
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND... SAY, IS YOUR SKIN CHANGING COLOR, SORT OF?
YES, THE AUTUMN... IS COMING.
AND SHE LAUGHS, UNSURE IF HE IS REALLY JOKING.
AND SHE LEAVES.
AFTER SHE HAS GONE, HE STANDS AND LISTENS... TO THE WATER, THE TREES, THE INSECTS...
AUTUMN IS COMING.
AUTUMN... AND SOMETHING ELSE. SOMETHING DARK...
IN THE CORNER OF HIS EYE, A SUDDEN BLUR OF GRAY, MOVING THROUGH THE TREETOPS, UP TO THE RIGHT...
HE TURNS, FOCUSING...
IT'S GONE.
HE STANDS. HE WONDERS...
8
WHAT COMES WITH THE AUTUMN?
CONTINUED ON 6TH PAGE FOLLOWING

AUTUMN CLEARANCE AUCTION!
OH, SAY, EXCUSE ME... YOU'VE JUST BEEN TO THE AUCTION, RIGHT?
SPARKY'S BATON ROUGE
AU..ION BA..RN
I HAVE.
OH, WELL, I JUST WONDERED IF YOU KNEW WHETHER THE LAWN FURNITURE HAD GONE YET?
BEER DRINKERS DO IT WITH GUSTO
NO
FGHIUKLM
STUVWXYZ
67890
BYE
NO. I'M SORRY.
FLIKE
AAH, IT DOESN'T MATTER.
SAY, YOU KNOW THIS STUFF COMES FROM SOME FAMILY THAT DIED? I READ IT INNA PAPERS.
MAN AN' HIS WIFE, BOTH DEAD. KID'S IN A LOONY BIN, I HEAR.
TERRIBLE BUSINESS. STILL, IT'S AN ILL WIND BLOWS NOBODY ANY GOOD.
MY WIFE'S IN THERE BIDDING FOR THE LAWN CHAIRS. I TELL YA, NEXT SUMMER I'M GONNA DO SOME REAL RELAXIN'...
AUCTION
EVERY SATURDAY NITE
MR. CORELLI...
BEER
NEXT SUMMER, YOU'LL BE IN JAIL FOR MANSLAUGHTER.
YOU SEE, SELENA DOESN'T LIKE THE LAWN CHAIRS.
GOOD DAY TO YOU, SIR.
HUH?
HEY... WAIT A MINUTE. HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT SELENA WAS THE NAME OF...
9

...MY WIFE, ABBY!
I MEAN, THAT STILL COUNTS FOR SOMETHING, DOESN'T IT?
WELL, YEAH, I GUESS IT DOES, BUT WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH WE TAKING A JOB?
ABBY..
ABBY, I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO SPELL THIS OUT, BUT..
WELL, YOU'VE BEEN GETTING A LOT MORE EXCITED ABOUT THOSE KIDS THAN YOU HAVE ABOUT ME LATELY.
THAT'S ALL
I..
I HAVE TO GO TO BATON ROUGE.
I'LL SEE YOU LATER



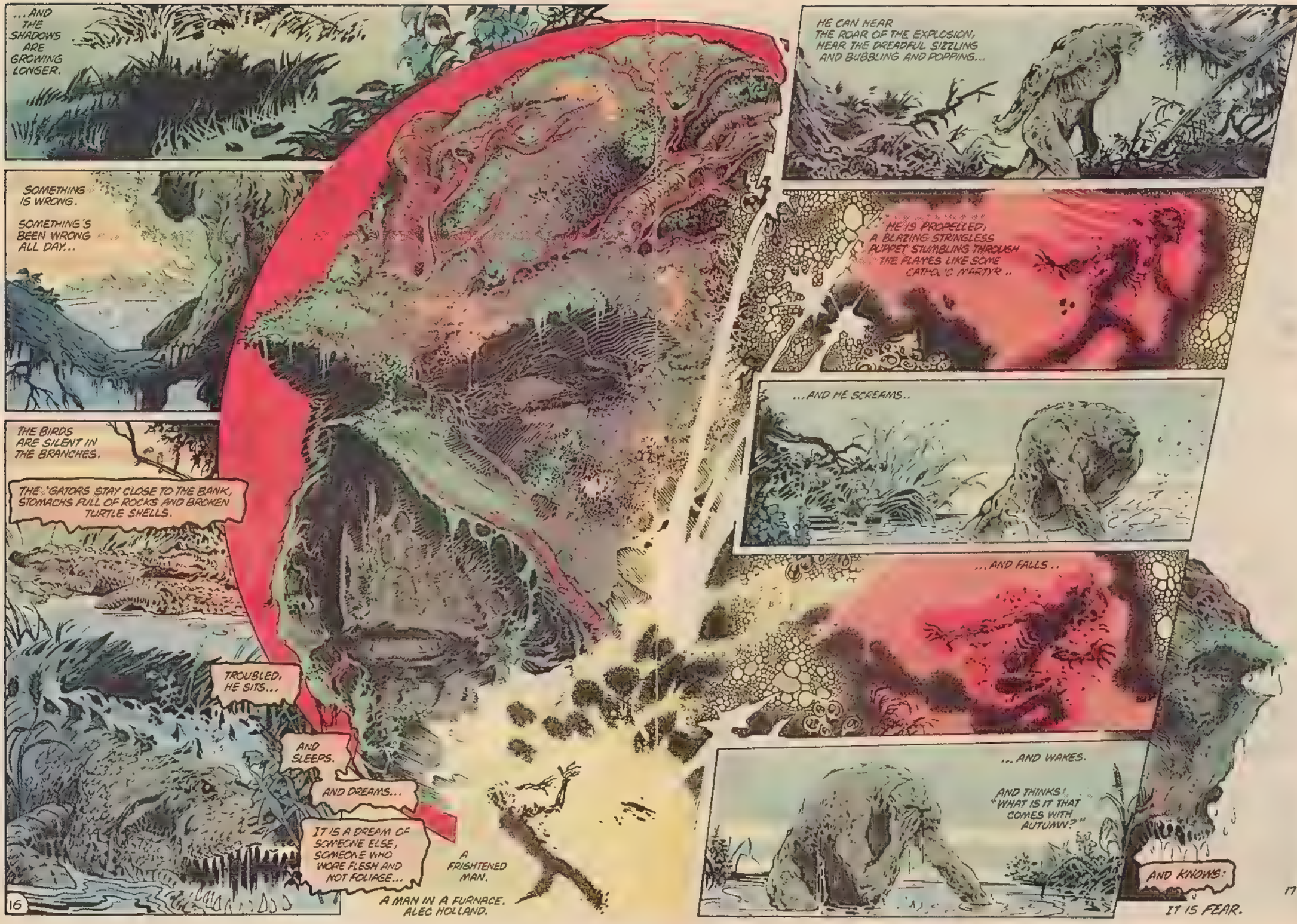
SOMETHING SNIGGERS AS IT UNCOILS FROM BENEATH THE BED. SOMETHING RUSTLES AS IT CLAMBERS DOWN THE DRAPES. MATT CABLE IS HAPPY IN A VERY PERSONAL HEAVEN...

. . A MOST PRIVATE NIGHTMARE.
"IS HE ASLEEP? IS THE KID ASLEEP YET?"
"WHO CARES? WE AREN'T DOING ANYTHING. "
"WELL, I GUESS NOT. HEY, D'YOU LIKE THE BOARD? I GOT IT AT 'THIRD EYE.' "
"MMM. WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?"
"WELL, YOU PUT YOUR FINGERTIPS ON IT LIKE THIS..."
"IT JUMPED! CHRIS, YOU MADE THAT JUMP!"
I DIDN'T. LISTEN, RELAX. IT'S SUPPOSED TO DO TH-S...
JEEZ! DID YOU FEEL THAT? HA HA HA HA!
CHRIS, IT'S SPELLING SOMETHING! OH GOD, WHAT IF IT'S MY AUNT SOPHIE?
HEY, NOW REALLY, WE HAVE TO BE SERIOUS OR WE SCARE THE SPIRITS AWAY NOW, WHAT'S THIS SPELLING...?
"O...M...M...O...X..."
OMMOX?
BE QUIET, JENNY. . "H. O. D. A. E. L.." IS THAT "HODAEL"?
LOOK... "K...A...M...A..R..A." "KAMARA." IS IT TRYING TO SPELL "CAMERA," DO YOU THINK?
UHGH. WHAT'S THAT SMELL?
12

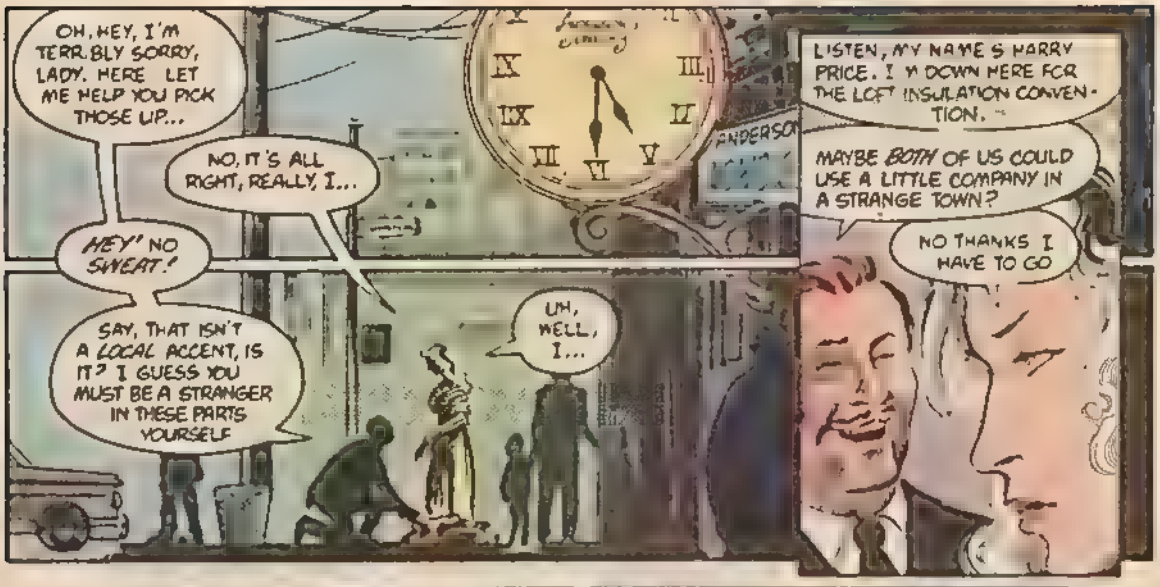
WHAT S/M...
OH, YEAH. JEEZ! THAT IS GROSS! IS THAT THE REFRIGERATOR, OR...
I DUNNO. SAY, IS IT COMING FROM UNDER THE..
.. TABLE?
JENNY!!
CHRIIISSSS!!
WHAT'S IT DOING TO MEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
OH JENNY.
OH JENNY..
OH NO..
AAAAAAEEE

HE LAY UPSTAIRS HE HEARD IT ALL..
THE SCREAMING.
THE SOUND EXACTLY LIKE SOMEONE EATING LETTUCE
THE SILENCE THAT FOLLOWED
AND THEN THE FOOTSTEPS.
AND THE LIGHT AS HIS BEDROOM DOOR SWUNG OPEN.
BUT THAT WAS NOT THE MOST AWFUL THING.
IT WAS THE WAY IT NUZZLED AGAINST HIM
IT WAS THE WAY THAT THE FUR ON ITS SNOUT WAS STICKY WHEN IT KISSED HIS HAND...
14
THAT WAS THE MOST AWFUL THING.
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

SELENA, THAT IS THE MOST AWFUL THING I HAVE EVER SEEN! WHERE ARE WE GONNA PUT IT?
BOBBY, SHUT UP AND TIE IT ONNA ROOF.
SPARKY'S BATON ROUGE AUCTION BARN
SELENA, I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF IT'S LEGAL DRIVING WITH STUFF ON THE ROOF!
WHY THE HELL DIDN'T YOU BUY THE LAWN CHAIRS?
BECAUSE I DIDN'T LIKE THE LAWN CHAIRS AND IT'S MY MONEY. NOW SHUT UP!
OH, RIGHT, SURE. I SUPPOSE THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD YOUR PSYCHO BOYFRIEND THAT YOU MET IN THE AUCTION?
I DIDN'T MEET ANYONE AT THE AUCTION. I WISH TO GOD I HAD, BELIEVE ME.
NOW GET IN THE CAR, BOBBY, AND DRIVE!
YOU KNOW! THE RED-HAIRED GUY WHO BOUGHT THE WEEJEE BOARD...
OH, YOU FEEBLE, SUSPICIOUS-MINDED LITTLE...
AND I SUPPOSE ME WAS THE ONE WHO PUT YOU UP TO BUYING THAT PIECE OF JUNK ON THE ROOF?
DRIVE, BOBBY...
JEEZ, NO WONDER THOSE PEOPLE GOT KILLED! ANYBODY WHO'D ALLOW AN EYESORE LIKE THAT INTO THEIR HOME DESERVES...
BO-BEE...
YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW...
KOFF! KAF!
IT'S TEN MINUTES AFTER FIVE...
15


...AND THE SHADOWS ARE GROWING LONGER.
SOMETHING IS WRONG.
SOMETHING'S BEEN WRONG ALL DAY...
THE BIRDS ARE SILENT IN THE BRANCHES.
THE 'GATORS STAY CLOSE TO THE BANK, STOMACHS FULL OF ROCKS AND BROKEN TURTLE SHELLS.
TROUBLED, HE SITS...
AND SLEEPS.
AND DREAMS...
IT IS A DREAM OF SOMEONE ELSE, SOMEONE WHO WORE FLESH AND NOT FOLIAGE...
A FRIGHTENED MAN.
A MAN IN A FURNACE. ALEC HOLLAND.
HE CAN HEAR THE ROAR OF THE EXPLOSION, HEAR THE DREADFUL SIZZLING AND BUBBLING AND POPPING...
HE IS PROPELLED, A BLAZING STRINGLESS PUPPET STUMBLING THROUGH THE FLAMES LIKE SOME CATHOLIC MARTYR..
...AND HE SCREAMS..
...AND FALLS..
...AND WAKES.
AND THINKS: "WHAT IS IT THAT COMES WITH AUTUMN?"
AND KNOWS:
IT IS FEAR.

IT IS FEAR THAT COMES WITH THE AUTUMN
HE FEELS IT...
El sueño de la razon produce monstruos
IT THRUSTS BENEATH HIS THICK, POWERFUL FINGERS, AND ITS BOUQUET OF SOURED SAINT IS NOT MASKED BY THE INCENSE
WITHIN THE DARK POOL OF HIS MIND IMAGES UNFOLD, OPENING LIKE ANEMONES IN BRINE..
THE MAN, THE WOMAN, THE BOY AWAKE UPSTAIRS..
THE PLANCHETTE MOVING...
IJK
...AMMOX..
TUV
...HODAEL...
...KAMARA.
THE PENULTIMATE FRAGMENT OF THE CRYPTOGRAM TUMBLES INTO PLACE... AN INVOCATION, SPELLED OUT BY A OUIJA BOARD.
THAT WAS HOW THE DAMNED THING HAD CLAWED ITS WAY THROUGH INTO THE WORLD OF SANITY AND REASON.
THERE IS MUCH TO BE DONE.
IT IS ALREADY HALF PAST FIVE...


OH, HEY, I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, LADY. HERE LET ME HELP YOU PICK THOSE UP...
NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT, REALLY, I...
HEY! NO SWEAT!
SAY, THAT ISN'T A LOCAL ACCENT, IS IT? I GUESS YOU MUST BE A STRANGER IN THESE PARTS YOURSELF
UH, WELL, I...
LISTEN, MY NAME'S HARRY PRICE. I'M DOWN HERE FOR THE LOFT INSULATION CONVENTION.
MAYBE BOTH OF US COULD USE A LITTLE COMPANY IN A STRANGE TOWN?
NO THANKS I HAVE TO GO

HEY, DON'T RUN OFF!
LISTEN, I KNOW, YOU MUST BE WARY OF STRANGERS. I MEAN, THE PEOPLE AROUND HERE... WEIRD? FORGET IT! I MET THIS GUY THIS MORNING AT THE DEPOT AND...
LISTEN... GET LOST OKAY?

WELL, IF THAT'S HOW YOU REALLY FEEL, BUT
...LOOK, I'VE GOT AN IDEA THAT YOU MIGHT BE SOMEONE WHO COULD REALLY USE LOFT INSULATION.
I GOT MY CARD RIGHT HERE...
BURGERS
ICE CREAM
LUNCH
7UP
Coca-Cola

BOBBY! FOR GOD'S SAKE LOOK OUT!!

EEEEEEEEEEE!
HAROLD PRICE
LOFT
SOLD
OH... MY...
GHAAADDO!
20

W'LLYA LOOK'T THAT! WHAT A CRAZY ACCIDENT.
SELENA, TH'S IS YOUR FAULT! IF WE'DA HAD THOSE LAWN CHAIRS..
OKAY, PO CE, LET'S BREAK TH'S UP.
NOW, YOU SAY YOU HAD TH'S THING TIED ON TO YOUR BELT?
OH BOBBY YOU JERK, YOU JERK
PLEASE... I HAVE TO COME THROUGH...
LEMME SEE THAT LICENSE
CRAZIEST THING I EVER SAW.
MRS CABLE?
DO YOU MIND IF I WALK WITH YOU A WHILE? WE HAVE MUCH TO DISCUSS
WE DO, HUM?
OKAY
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
WHO THE HELL INDEED! MAHAHAHA
FORGIVE ME, MRS CABLE.
MY NAME IS BLOOD.
JASON BLOOD

BLOOD ON ITS MUZZLE.
BLOOD ON HIS HANDS WHERE IT KISSED HIM.
HE HAD LAID AWAKE ALL NIGHT, UNMOVING, ITS SICKLY BREATH WARM UPON HIS NECK.
IN THE MORNING, THE MONKEY KING HAD GONE. THE NEIGHBORS CALLED AND FOUND THE BODIES OF HIS PARENTS. THEN THE POLICE CALLED AND FOUND HIM.
THEY TOOK HIM TO THE POLICE STATION, BUT HE COULDN'T TELL THEM ANYTHING.
THEY TOOK HIM TO THE HOSPITAL, BUT THEY COULDN'T DO ANYTHING.
FINALLY, THEY BROUGHT HIM TO ELYSIUM LAWNS...
...AND THEY COULDN'T DO ANYTHING EITHER. THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE HIM WHEN HE TOLD THEM ABOUT THE MONKEY KING.
THEY THOUGHT HE WAS CRAZY.
BUT HE WASN'T.
IT LICKS HIS CHEEK. HE KNOWS WHAT IT WANTS...
IT WANTS HIM TO BE ITS FRIEND.

IT WANTS HIM TO TELL IT WHAT TO DO...

BUT HE CAN'T. HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW.

AND SO IT JUST DOES WHAT IT WANTS..

THE LITTLE GIRL IN THE NEXT ROOM IS CALLED ROBERTA.

AT THE AGE OF FOUR, ROBERTA ACCIDENTALLY SMOTHERED HER INFANT BROTHER WITH A POLYETHYLENE BAG. THAT'S WHY SHE'S HERE.

THE TASTE OF HER FEAR IS BRIGHT AND COPPERY.

IT DRINKS BOTH DEEPLY AND WELL.

IN THE NEXT ROOM IS A BOY NAMED MICHAEL, AND AFTER THAT, JOHN. AND THEN JESSICA AND DELROY AND SIMONE...

THERE ARE MANY CHILDREN, BUT THE NIGHT IS LONG...

...AND IT IS VERY HUNGRY.

El sueño de la razon produce monstruos

next: "...a time of running..."

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher
Dick Giordano, Vice Pres.-Executive Editor
Karen Berger, Editor
Tom Condon, Managing Editor
Pat Bastienne, Editorial Coordinator
Bob Rozakis, Production Manager
Joe Orlando, Vice Pres.-Editorial Director
Paul Levitz, Vice Pres.-Operations
Bruce Bristow, Marketing Director
Arthur Gutowitz, Treasurer

Hi, my name is Karen Berger, and I can't express enough how happy I am to be the brand-new editor of SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING, effective with this issue! For those of you who've never heard of me (and for those of you who have), I also edit the LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES books (the new soon-to-be released Baxter paper version and the continuing newsprint TALES OF THE LEGION) AMETHYST (also soon-to-be released as a monthly ongoing comic) and NEW TALENT SHOWCASE.

I started working at DC Comics about 4½ years ago as assistant editorial coordinator. How did a nice Brooklyn College graduate with a degree in English wind up in the crazy world of comics, you ask? Well, one day after I'd come home tired from looking for a job in publishing, my long-time close friend, J. M. De Matteis (now Marvel comics writer, then a budding DC writer), called me up and said "Hey, Karen, this guy at DC, Paul Levitz, needs an assistant. Why don't you call him up?" I did and before I knew it, I was sitting across the hall from Paul, then Editorial Coordinator and Editor, now V.P.—Operations and Legion writer. Paul introduced me to this strange medium, teaching me lots and lots about this industry from a creative and business stand, and greatly influenced my own editorial viewpoint. Little did I know, one day I'd be editing his work!

I became the editor of HOUSE OF MYSTERY in the spring of 1980 and the editorial coordinator in the following winter, a position I held for 2 long years. I also picked up the editorial chores on the LEGION and AMETHYST somewhere along the way, and about a year ago, with my sanity still intact (I think), I became a full-time editor.

Now, getting back to the reason why we're here...

THE SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING is, in my opinion, one of the best comics currently being produced in the industry, and I'm not just saying that, either. Alan Moore, an extremely gifted writer, has brought his very special vision to the character. Stephen Bissette's storytelling, not to mention his drawing, combined with John Totleben's incredible inks, is just, dare I say it, terrific. I could go on at length about these talented folk, but I've already asked them to go on at length for me. And...believe it or not, this is what I got.

* * * * *

Alan Moore

Born in Nov. 1953. His first recorded utterances, delivered to the doctor who had just slapped life and breath into his dangling infant frame, were "You're on the list, ratnose." For the next twenty-five years, nothing happened.

In 1979, he was alarmed to find himself working as a cartoonist and illustrator for the English music press with absolutely no recollection of how he had come to be in this baffling situation. Even more disturbing, he learned that he was married with a wife and infant daughter, and that his drawing ability was on a par with that of the common earthworm. Gradually, things grew worse.

In desperation, he became a comics writer, working on British publications like *Dr. Who Monthly*, *2000 AD*, and *Warrior*. Another daughter appeared. The family cat vanished and was never seen again. In 1982, the Society of Strip Illustrators awarded him their Best Writer award, and then did the same thing in 1983, presumably due to a computer error. He also received the '82 Eagle Awards for Best Writer and Best Story, but was bitterly disappointed to learn that an "Eagle" was in fact a moderately sized blue certificate rather than a large and dangerous strain of wildfowl capable of carrying away small children. Time passed.

Early in 1983, in a futile effort to regain his lost youth, he adopted the pseudonym of Translucia Baboon and along with Gilbert and Sullivan-influenced punk rockers *The Sinister Ducks*, he released his first single upon the Situation Two Label. It rapidly acquired the kind of status that show biz people like to refer to as "utter dismal failure." Faced by harsh criticism of his abilities as a vocalist, he responded characteristically by saying "I give up. You won't have Translucia Baboon to kick around anymore."

He currently lives in Northampton, England. For relaxation he enjoys staring at a fixed spot in the middle distance for hours at a time, fainting, and talking about himself in the third person. When he is an old man, he will look like the evil twin brother of Father Christmas.

* * * * *

Stephen Bissette

I'm a born and bred Vermonter, presently living in the mountains of Southern Vermont with beloved wife Nancy, lovely l'il daughter Maia Rose (who was born here at home in April of '83), bitchy cat Ymir, and spunky pup Cerrillos. Nancy and I met in Santa Fe, Mexico, and later married...Nancy paints, writes, and has worked for over two years now at a local school for autistic and emotionally disturbed children. John Totleben and I twisted this into the story idea that evolved into our present Demon tale (SOTST# 25-27) and Nancy provided Alan Moore with much of the background material needed to do these issues.

I began drawing dinosaurs at the age of four, and never outgrew that childish pleasure. After a steady diet of comics, monster movies, and FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND, there followed a series of tiny comics drawn with childhood buddy Mitch Casey, in Duxbury, VT... We'd sell 'em in grade school for a nickel. Mitch's comic masterpiece "Attack of the Giant Tse-Tse Flies" became the model to which I aspired for years!

Higher education was forever altered when my art teacher, Bill Cathey, showed me a copy of ZAP #0. I began to keep my own secret, uncensored sketch books which I would only share with friends. I went to Johnson State College for art, only to be sidetracked doing lighting for theater, and showing movies until one Dr. Nigel O. Ersatz (A.K.A. Tim Viereck) put up money for some friends and I to print up 200 copies of an underground comic we dubbed ABYSS. Amigo Steve Perry, who had written some of ABYSS (and now writes for Marvel: TIME SPIRITS), talked me into trying to get into Joe Kubert's brand-new School of Cartoon and Graphic Art in Dover, NJ. ABYSS was my portfolio piece, and I was accepted as a member of Joe's very first class, a two-year experience that opened the door for my making a living as a cartoonist.

Living, breathing, eating comics and art with classmates like Rick Veitch, Tom Yeates, Ron Zalme, and many others (including later, John Totleben); studying under Joe, Dick Giordano, Ric Estrada, Hy Eisman, and Lee Elias (among others); and working directly under Joe's guidance on numerous projects hammered me into vaguely "professional" shape, paving the way for my future endeavors.

Visual influences on my art include Maia's dirty diapers; countless hours outside watching the world; childhood scrutiny of bugs, reptiles, and amphibians; many of the Surrealists: H. Bosch, René Magritte, Basil Wolverton,

Boris Artzybasheff, Ernest T. Seton, Chas. Knight, Ray Harryhausen, Joe Kubert, Greg Irons, Sam Glanzman (especially KONA), Jesse Marsh, the Brothers Veitch, Ditko, Kirby (especially his early '70 DC creations); the Theatre of the Absurd; underground comics and movies; and many, *too* many movies...particularly the films of Sergio Leone, Mario Bava, Nicholas Roeg, and David Lynch. Past published works include comic art (and some writing) for SGT. ROCK, UNEXPECTED, HOUSE OF MYSTERY, SOJOURN, HEAVY METAL, EPIC, DR. WIRTHAM'S BIZARRE ADVENTURES, Scholastic's WEIRD WORLDS and BANANAS, book illustrations, posters, and a stint designing monster figurines for TSR's current Dungeons and Dragons toys (which John did, too, even if he won't 'fess up to it).

* * * * *

John Totleben

Born in Erie, Pennsylvania, on Feb. 16, 1958, I spent the larger part of my childhood occupying myself with MONSTER magazines, frogs and toads, Aurora plastic MONSTER models, snakes and lizards, MONSTER movies, comic books, and endless hours of drawing (usually MONSTERS). Without question, I am the product of my environment. Heh.

My earliest artistic influences were Neal Adams and Bernie Wrightson and, a little later, Jeff Jones, Walt Simonson, Al Williamson, Roy Krenkel, and Frank Frazetta. Also, numerous artists such as Franklin Booth, Virgil Finlay, Giovanni Piranesi, Arthur Rackham, and Rembrandt, among others. Currently, I derive much inspiration from artists like J.M.W. Turner, Max Klinger, Gustav Klimt, Albrecht Durer, John Everett Millais, and many others too numerous to mention here.

As a student, I was fortunate enough to be able to attend a high school that had a three-day-a-week system designed for students to spend maximum class time in their chosen vocational areas of concentration. After three years in an art class under this system, I'd guess it safe to say that I had been thoroughly grounded in the basics of art...and then some.

In Sept., 1977, I arrived at the Joe Kubert School, where I spent the following year in pursuit of comic book knowledge. During this time I made many extremely odd acquaintances, among whom include Steve Bissette, Tom Yeates, and Rick Veitch.

Having made it this far with all my vital organs still intact, I suppose the best is yet to come. For those of you who may have been waiting—here it is...my motto (it's really cool. I stole it from a drunken friend at a wild party a few years back):

"IF YOU CAN'T FLY LIKE AN EAGLE, GET THE **** OUT OF THE SKY!"

nuff said

* * * * *

Dear Editor,

Great! Fantastic! I loved it! SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING #18 was all of this and more. The cover was fantastic. Mr. Yeates has outdone himself this time. The color was dark and moody, just how Swampie looks. (By the way, who's the colorist on the covers?)

The story was great too; the idea of mixing new and old stories was terrific. You've got to do it again sometime. Whoever thought of it? He is a genius. I mean a real genuine genius.

Keep the stuff up and you'll have me running back screaming for more.

Donald Necessary

Tatjana Wood colors the covers as well as the interiors of the book, Donald, and...I'm not sure who the genius was who originally thought of mixing new and old stories, but that story device does appear in comicdom and has occurred a lot over the years.

* * * * *

Dear Len:

SWAMP THING #19 was a gorgeous sight for sore eyes! One look at Abigail Arcane's doe eyes on page 4 and you feel like sentencing everybody on the creative staff to 20 lashes with a bag of wet moss for daring to exclude her from the book for so long. The art on the story was so gleefully gruesome that one doesn't know whether to wildly applaud or lose one's lunch; but pages 6 and 7 can be stared at for hours without loss of interest. Arcane's return was long overdue—I guess it *is* only the good who die young. Despite the good bits that Liz and Dennis have added to the first year of the story, I already feel like exiling them to a leper colony and letting Matt and Abby take over full-time. And God Bless Them, may they somehow live happily ever after.

Sincerely,
Charles D. Brown
39 Stockton St.
Brentwood, NY 11717

Dear Swamp Things,

Representing "The Man Who Would Not Die" was an excellent idea to celebrate the man who would not die's return. Thank you.

Anthony Padilla
3701 Oakgreen Ave. N.
Stillwater, MN 55082

Dear Len and Joey,

I read SOTST #19 yesterday. You remember that one, don't you? Matt Cable and his cute little brain cell creatures? Arcane and his good-looking crew of insectoid Un-Men?

Anyway, last night I dreamt pleasantly of being in the bathtub, when from out of nowhere an airborn un-thing grabbed my arm. As we grappled, a tiny crouton of a critter drove its hook-shaped body into my left ring toe, somehow immobilizing me. I don't recall how I survived in the nightmare.

Point is, though, your story *affected* me. Which means you did your job. It's a good feeling to know that after all these years I can still derive long-term residual effects from comic-reading.

And don't worry about me—my dreams never recur. That would be redundant. That would be redundant. That would be redundant. That would be...

Art Vidro
34 North Court
Roslyn Heights, NY 11577

Dear Editor,

SWAMP THING is getting continually better and better and I couldn't be more pleased about this news. I recently bought #'s 1 & 3-10 of the original SWAMP THING by Len Wein and Berni Wrightson. They were very weird and unusual, I found; surrealistic and bordering on the fringes of a madman's nightmares. Martin Pasko must be going to sleep at night with the original ST's under his pillow, he'd have to, to think up such fantastic story lines, or is *he* bordering on the edge of insanity? No matter, for #19's "And the Meek Shall Inherit..." was a work of art.

The writing was superlative and some of the speeches made by the characters and narrator could come straight out of a science-fiction novel. For instance, on page 9, Arcane says that "'Magic' is nothing but an advanced technology that is beyond the comprehension of the pathetically unsophisticated, such as yourself." Phrases like that show that Mr. Pasko has an extremely well-developed mind and he lets us in on his secret every month as we read his truly deep plots. He certainly does deserve to earn his paycheck, in my eyes.

While I don't particularly enjoy Stephen Bissette's art, I have to admit that it is indeed *very* different. While I resent Swampy's loss of regular penciller Tom Yeates, Bissette makes a competent replacement. His characters, such as this month's Un-Men, are extremely strange to look at and are so unusual that you look at them again and again and still you marvel at them and their incredible shapes. The Moth-Men on page 14 is a perfect example.

Gentlemen, SWAMP THING has great potential and is unhampered by conventional means and attributes. I hope that every time I open an issue, I get a journey through the complex insanities that exist only in the darkest recesses of the human mind.

Thank you for SWAMP THING.

Bob Mercer
9 Hennebury Pl.
St. John's, Nfld,
Canada A1C 2V2

In closing, I'd like to thank Ezra Veitch (ten-year-old son of cartoonist Rick Veitch) for providing us with Paul's drawings this issue. Ezra lives in Greftson, VT, and has been at the drawing board since he could sling a pencil without hurting himself. Don't be surprised if you see comics from him in the future!

* * * * *

Thanks for writing and for reading, everyone! Next month: "A Time of Running," the second part in this special Demon trilogy! Make sure you're here—you'll be sorry if you're not! See you then...Karen